

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

A listing of all claims and their current status in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.121(2) is provided below. This listing of the claims replaces all prior listings, and versions, of the claims in the present application.

1. (Currently Amended) A suture anchor for insertion into a cylindrical bone hole to anchor a suture to bone, the suture anchor comprising:

a distal body portion defining a longitudinal axis, the distal body portion having a diameter sufficient to fit in said bone hole, being insertable into the bone hole, and defining a radially outwardly projecting anchoring member operable to retain the suture anchor in the bone hole; and

a proximal body portion integrally formed with and extending longitudinally from the distal body portion, the proximal body portion having opposed gripping portions moveable transversely between an open position and a closed position, the gripping portions defining a transverse, suture receiving aperture between them for receiving a transversely oriented section of at least one suture,

wherein the aperture ~~being is~~ relatively larger and able to receive the suture, in two-way, free sliding relationship when the gripping portions are in the open position, and

wherein the aperture ~~being is~~ relatively smaller and able to grip the suture in gripping relationship so the suture is prevented from moving in any direction when the gripping portions are in the closed position,

wherein the proximal body portion ~~being is~~ responsive to insertion into the bone hole to move the gripping portions from the open to the closed position as the suture anchor is pushed into the bone hole,

wherein the proximal body portion has a maximum transverse dimension in the open position, the proximal body portion has a smaller maximum transverse position in the closed position, and the anchoring member has a maximum transverse dimension smaller than the maximum transverse dimension of the proximal body portion in the open position,

wherein the gripping portions form a top surface portion of the transverse aperture that encloses a portion of the transverse aperture in the proximal direction, and

wherein the gripping portions extend over and beyond the transverse aperture while the suture anchor is in the open position so the transversely oriented section of each suture is prevented from exiting the aperture longitudinally.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously Presented) The suture anchor of claim 1 wherein the proximal body portion includes at least one channel extending proximally from the aperture to receive the suture in a recessed protected position.

7. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor of claim 1 wherein the anchoring member comprises at least one annular ring transverse to the longitudinal axis of the distal body portion.

8. (Previously Presented) The suture anchor of claim 1, wherein the proximal body portion further comprises a locking mechanism operable to retain the proximal body portion in the closed position.

9. (Previously Presented) The suture anchor of claim 8 wherein the locking mechanism comprises a first portion defining a lock projection and a second portion defining a lock recess for receiving the lock projection, the first and second portions sliding adjacent one another between the open and closed positions, the lock projection positively engaging the lock recess in the closed position.

10. (Previously Presented) The suture anchor of claim 1 wherein the aperture is elongated longitudinally to receive at least two suture ends extending transversely and spaced longitudinally within the aperture.

11. (Previously Presented) The suture anchor of claim 1 wherein the aperture is elongated transversely to receive at least two suture ends extending transversely and spaced transversely in a direction orthogonal to the axis of the suture within the aperture.

12. (Previously Presented) The suture of claim 1 further comprising a suture wherein the suture has first and second ends, the first end being fixed to the suture anchor and the second end being receivable by the aperture in the open position to form a sliding suture loop, the second end being gripped by the aperture in the closed position to form a fixed suture loop.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Cancelled).

15. (Previously Presented) A unitary suture anchor for securing a suture into a cylindrical bone tunnel without tying a knot comprising:

a distal body portion comprising an anchor member operable to secure the suture anchor to the bone;

a proximal body portion comprising a pair of elongated and relatively movable first body members, at least one of the first body members being hingedly connected to the distal body portion, the first body members being relatively movable between a suture receiving open position and a suture locking closed position, said proximal body portion having a generally elliptical cross-sectional shape when said elongated first body members are in the suture receiving position and a generally circular cross-sectional shape when said elongated first body members are in the suture locking position within the bone tunnel;

a transverse suture receiving aperture interposed between the first body members, the aperture adapted to receive a transversely oriented section of at least one suture in two-way, free sliding relationship when the first body members are in the suture receiving open position, the aperture being deformed and gripping the suture when the first body members are in the suture locking closed position; and

a locking mechanism comprising a transverse body member extending from each of the first body members, the transverse body members being in sliding contact from the open position to the closed position, the transverse body members defining a male/female engagement mechanism in which a portion of one transverse body member snaps over a portion of the other transverse body member in positive engagement to lock the first body members in the suture locking position,

wherein a top surface portion of the transverse aperture enclosing a portion of the transverse aperture in the proximal direction is at least one gripping portion extending over and beyond the transverse aperture while the suture anchor is in the open position so the transversely oriented section of each suture is prevented from exiting the aperture longitudinally.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Original) The suture anchor of claim 15 wherein the suture anchor comprises a bioabsorbable material.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously Presented) The suture anchor of claim 15 wherein the proximal body portion includes at least one channel extending proximally from the aperture to receive the suture in a recessed protected position.

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Previously Presented) The suture anchor of claim 6, wherein each channel extends from the transverse aperture and opens through the proximal body portion.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Cancelled)

30. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor of claim [[29]] 1, further comprising at least one channel defined by a void in the portion of one gripping portion extending over and beyond the transverse aperture.

31. (Previously Presented) The suture anchor of claim 21, wherein each channel extends from the aperture and opens through one of the transverse body members.